

The Classical Bulletin

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Shelley as a Substitute for Horace

As part of the small but rather definite movement in this country for a return to the liberal arts college of old, there is a tendency to look with favor on the revival of the ancient *trivium* so long in disfavor. The spirit behind this aspect of the movement is not, as one might suspect, a mere nostalgia for "the good old days," but the recognition of the rather obvious fact that, in throwing overboard something that was thought outworn, we have failed to evolve another system capable of filling the vacancy.

Particularly do the advocates of the movement see this to be true in the method of teaching literature, where the modern system is beginning to make itself felt in a general decadence of taste and an appallingly low level of artistic accomplishment. The general prevalence of bad taste has confirmed these men in the suspicion (advanced somewhat timidly because of its radical character) that there is such a thing as good taste, and that this habit of mind is not native to Rousseau's delightful savage, but is the fruit of hard systematic training towards a state of soul to which man in his highest moments of culture has attained. Such a system of training they see embodied in the *trivium*, one of the underlying ideas of which is that, just as in philosophy a rather definite amount of training in logic and dialectic is necessary before any given generation can appreciate and carry forward to greater perfection the corpus of fundamental truth worked out by the great minds of the past, so in literature, before one can understand or sympathize with the artistic accomplishments of great geniuses, there must be a period of training in the principles and practices underlying these works. Of course, behind this theory are the two assumptions that there actually is some body of artistic and philosophical accomplishments which deserves to be carried forward to form the foundation of our own cultural progress, and that the habits of mind necessary for the assimilation of it are not natural to man, but the result of training. Both of these assumptions are denied by educators in our own days, and so is, logically, the necessity of years of training for the attainment of these habits of mind, once called culture.

The astonishing barbarism of the unspoiled natural man, who lives in isolation from tradition, has made many today look with favor on the ancient machinery of civilization. So they cast longing eyes on the *trivium*, particularly on that aspect of it in which a definite system of rhetoric and poetic was taught, founded upon the same principles taught later in philosophy, and

forming a perfectly consistent and homogeneous system of training in taste and artistic practice—a system, moreover, actually justified by centuries of the greatest literature the world has seen.

I think there is some possibility that we, on looking around, may find ourselves in practice somewhat out of sympathy with this new movement. In theory we stand for the continuity of culture, but in certain points of our practice we are opposing it, and this for a reason I shall try to explain. We teach our rhetoric and poetic principally through the mother tongue, as indeed we should. Theoretically the principles and practices we inculcate here should be confirmed by the Latin and Greek authors we study concurrently. Such is our theory, but practically it does not work out that way, because we have failed to take into account the very important fact that modern English literary theory is built upon a poetic and rhetoric largely antithetical to that of the ancients. English literary theory, in other words, is no longer basically Graeco-Roman—has not been so, in fact, for some time. A new aesthetic, based on a new philosophy, has since the 18th Century gradually crowded out the older theory, until today there is very little of it operative at all. The crowding-out process has been at work because the fundamental principles of the two theories are opposed to each other; it is impossible to reconcile them; it must be either one or the other. And so our theory of reciprocity between English and Latin collapses; we teach our rhetoric and poetic wholly from English; the ancient practice becomes a doctrine, beautiful but dead, and we have one more reason for the departmental system.

If we except the obvious inconsistency involved in such a system, there is no reason why we should be particularly perturbed. If the modern world has evolved a better system of poetic and rhetoric, let us accept the new and reverently inter the old. But is this the case? There is no use arguing speculatively about the question. We have at hand examples of treatises that expound the ancient system, and examples of the modern books that have crowded them out. Suppose we compare them, first to establish the fact that their principles are entirely opposed, and secondly to enable us to judge whether or not the 19th Century actually did produce a rhetoric and poetic of such excellence as to justify us in scrapping the old and committing our hopes entirely to the new.

Confining our investigations to the field of poetic, we may take as our examples the works of two poets—the *Ars Poetica* of Horace, and Shelley's *Defense of Poetry*.

In the well-known letter to the Pisos we have a sparkling epitome of the best principles and practices that the artistic wisdom of the ancients has produced. The philosophy of Aristotle, the wise experimental findings of Homer, the dramatists, Demosthenes, Thucydides, Democritus—all the wisdom of five cultured centuries of philosophic thought and artistic experience is concentrated in this little treatise. It is something more than a concentration; it is a distillation, in which the principles Horace enumerates preside over his own composition, producing a work that at once explains and subtly illustrates the theory in question. Whatever may be said of Horace as a poet, he was certainly a literary critic of exceptional shrewdness and penetration; and he stood for a definite system, which was perhaps his undoing.

Up to a recent period (say from Chaucer to Gray) the *Ars Poetica* served not only as a gateway to the ancient artistic experience, but also as a text book for modern practice. Its influence in forming public taste and guiding literary practice would be difficult to overestimate. It was only when those influences which had been steadily at work since the 18th Century had finally succeeded in transposing the basis of English literature from the ancient to the so-called modern, that it ceased to exercise these offices. That it did finally fall into disuse (not all at once but by degrees) would be sufficient evidence, if no other existed, that the ancient theory had become inoperative in English letters. For Horace has always stood for the ancient ideal in its purity, not only in his own day and among his own countrymen, but in European literature; as long as men looked with respect towards Greece and Rome, his pronouncements were held in high honor. We may take the gradual decline in importance as a critical document of the *Ars Poetica* from the late 18th Century as a symptom rather than a proof of the change in attitude. For the evidences of the change are plentiful enough, without calling upon this as a proof, however blandly some may choose to ignore them and to cherish the opinion that despite the enormous distortions in religion, economics, government, and all other departments of human activity that have occurred in the past two centuries, literature somehow or other has been miraculously preserved from serious alteration in its fundamental principles. The transition, as a matter of fact, began rather early; by the end of the 18th Century the new theory had been formed by philosophical literary men who were busy applying the psychology of Hume and Hartley to artistic practice. Early in the 19th Century its doctrine was in the hands of the poets, and we find it embodied in Shelley's rhapsodic *Defense of Poetry*, which we have only to place beside the *Ars Poetica* to observe how wide was the breach between the new aesthetic and the old, how complete the break.

As an instance of this we may take the doctrine proposed by Shelley on poetic inspiration, with which the greater part of his treatise is concerned. It is well expressed in the lines, "Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the words which they express they understand not." Bards, Shelley would have

it, are a race set apart even from ordinary literary men. They are not concerned with questions of technique. "I appeal," he says, "to the greatest poets of the present day, whether it is not an error to assert that the finest passages of poetry are produced by labor and study. The toil and delay recommended by critics can justly be interpreted to mean no more than a careful observation of inspired moments."

The lines of Horace on the *limae labor et mora*, to which Shelley is obviously referring here, strike one with all the force of antithesis:

Vos O

Pompilius sanguis, carmen reprehendite, quod non

Multa dies et multa litura coercuit atque

Præsectum decies non castigavit ad unguem (Ars P. 291-94)

Shelley's poet will not use the file. He waits patiently for the descent from on high of the afflatus, which differs from the classical sort of poetic inspiration in that it seems to be a sort of visiting frenzy that sits upon the unconscious soul and hurls it about as it wishes. His description of it is interesting: "The persons in whom the power resides may often, as far as regards any portion of their nature, have little apparent correspondence with the spirit of good of which they are the ministers. But whilst they deny or adjure, they are yet compelled to serve the power which is seated on the throne of their own soul. It is impossible to read the compositions of the most celebrated writers of the present day without being startled by the electric life that burns within their words. They measure the circumference and sound the depths of human nature with a comprehensive and all-penetrating spirit, and they themselves are perhaps the most sincerely astonished at its manifestation; for it is less their spirit than the spirit of the age."

He refers to this spirit in another place as a "visitation of divinity"; but it takes no expert in the discernment of spirits to perceive that only an ingenuous belief in the evolutionary doctrine of progress can identify "divinity" with "the spirit of the age." Neither is this inspiration prophetic in the Hebraic sense of the word. Prophets, both major and minor, have been stoned to death precisely because they refused to express the spirit of the world. And, above all, is this inspiration non-classical. Some commentators have mistakenly referred to it as Platonic. It is, in fact, a complete denial of the Platonic theory. Plato, indeed, said something to the effect that poets were the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration, and the words they express they understand not; but he most assuredly did not proceed from these premises to Shelley's grandiose conclusion, which comes as a bombastic close to this most enlightening paragraph: "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world!" Plato's conclusion from the same premises, it will be recalled, is that poets of this variety are undesirable citizens. So it is true to say that Shelley's theory is Plato's, without the significant padded-cell for madmen of this sort, which is an indispensable part of his complete doctrine.

I have called Shelley's theory non-classical. It has, it is true, some things in common with that conception of

poetic inspiration which guided the practice of the ancients. Both agree that it is not entirely a manufactured thing; that it is a sort of divine visitation that comes somewhat capriciously. Even Horace, who may be said to represent that wing of Greek criticism which tends to over-stress the artistic element in poetry, is insistent on the divine origin of the gift of poesy. "*Orpheus, sacer interpretesque deorum*," was the first poet, and since then bards under the inspiration of Apollo and the heavenly muses have "founded cities, reclaimed men from vague concubinage, appointed rights for man and wife, engraved laws on tablets of wood" and have exercised the functions of oracle and prophet. Nor is it everyone that the gods call to be their spokesman.

The precise point of difference between Shelley's inspiration and that of the ancients is not in the heavenly origin, but in the manner in which this visitation of divinity affects the faculties of the poet visited by it. With Shelley the descent of the afflatus is accompanied by the complete paralysis of the intellect and will of the poet. Not he, but the spirit perched upon him, does the singing; his individuality is sunk; he babbles blindly of things unknown to him. Horace has this sort of possession in mind when he talks about the mad poet whom everybody avoids as he goes about with his head in the skies, belching forth verses, and finally stumbles into a well.

Far from being something which temporarily anaesthetizes the higher faculties of the poet, poetic inspiration in the ancient way of looking at it wrought its effects by a heightening of the individual's conscious powers of vision and feeling, by a sharpening of the intellect and an enrichment of the imagination and the emotions. *Artis scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons*, says Horace. The poetic gift is not a species of madness, a temporary interruption of reason and volitional control; or if it is a madness, it is a rational sort of madness, which makes itself evident not by an abandonment of the specifically human qualities in man, but by an increase in their power.

In this we have not only the distinction between the theory of Horace and that of Shelley, but the point of difference between ancient and modern poetic theory, and the doctrine that has been most fruitful in determining all the diversity of modern practice and all the diversity of result. I do not mean to say that the modern theory is something entirely new and unknown to the ancients. Some of Horace's delicious satire is directed against those who held the theory in his own day—followers of Democritus "who excluded from Helicon all poets in their right senses." The point I am trying to make is that, while existing in ancient times, this theory existed as a minority theory, and was never permitted to preponderate over the purer doctrine, dominating education, criticism, and practice, as we have seen it do in our own day. Either the inspired good sense of the ancients or the providence of God saw to it that Graeco-Roman literature should remain consistently true to the deep, broad principles of Aristotelian philosophy, and that the axioms of taste and practice derived therefrom should never lack outstanding critical and creative cham-

pions; so that despite the concurrent existence of a rival school, we have today no considerable example of the work of this school, and classical literature remains for us the product of not two but one school of aesthetic thought.

Augustine, Jerome, Boethius and the early fathers of the church saw in this one system and in the literature that it produced something almost akin to a primitive revelation, and the Church from her earliest days has struggled to pass it on down through the generations inseparably connected with the other and newer riches of her culture. It is interesting to note that, as long as the Church presided at the councils of European culture, so long did the wisdom of the ages, the Graeco-Roman ideal in philosophy and art, remain an active living tradition. But when Europe repudiated the Church, she repudiated everything the Church regarded as part of God's deposit of faith, as well as the classical ideal. Shelley is only one of the many 18th and 19th Century Europeans who, loosened from the guidance of the Church and the benefit of divine providence, revived from out of antiquity the doctrines of the minority school, the school which had produced no great classical literature and against which the productive stream of the classical tradition had definitely set its face.

Listen to the regal contempt that Horace has for the mad poetic followers of Democritus. Because Democritus excludes from Helicon all poets in their right senses, "Therefore," he says, "a large proportion of would-be poets care not to pare their nails or shave their beards, haunt retired spots, and eschew the public baths. He, think they, will get himself the estimation and name of poet who never trusts to the barber Licinus that precious pate incurable by all the hellebore of three Antieyras." We have only to add a few touches here to make this an accurate picture of the modern long-haired, absinth-drinking, careless school of Bohemian poets which has dominated Europe for over a century.

Most of the doctrines and practices of the cult take their rise from the theory of poetic inspiration that Democritus and Shelley held in common. One has only to enumerate them to recognize the exalted place they hold today; the refusal to make intellectual content an ingredient in poetry, the glorification of vague feeling, the worship of spontaneity, and its corollary, contempt of the *limae labor*, the divorce of art from morality, the deification of the artist.

Place this program for the poet alongside that recommended by Horace and the ancients, with its insistence that the poet is not dispensed from the common human office of thinking, that to write well one must think correctly and to think correctly one must study philosophy, especially moral philosophy (Horace recommends Socrates), that the artist must be in complete control of his faculties, that restraint is an artistic virtue to be striven for, that bombast and turgidity are artistic vices to be weeded out, and finally that writing is an art that involves training, because its function is to express ideas which must be carefully formed, and is not the spontaneous "spilling of one's bright illimitable soul"; com-

(Concluded on p. 24)

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Vol. VIII DECEMBER, 1931 No. 3

Editorial

We should like to call the attention of our readers to a short article in the *Classical Journal* for November (Vol. XXVII, No. 2, pp. 119-125) entitled *Linguistics in Elementary Courses*, by Edwin Lee Johnson. It contains excellent practical suggestions for making the high-school Latin and Greek class interesting to the pupil by means of a judicious and non-technical introduction to the history, phonetics, morphology, and logic of the classical languages. The idea is, of course, not a new one, and some of our readers who were initiated into the mysteries of Latin grammar thirty or forty years ago may still cherish pleasant recollections of some high-school teacher who, despite rather forbidding textbooks, was not an *Orbilius plagosus*, as Mr. Johnson's appears to have been, but an inspiring, sympathetic, and resourceful humanist teacher. Nevertheless, the article is very timely, because with our attractive modern elementary textbooks we are often tempted to seek sources of interest for our classes outside the classical languages themselves. As Mr. Johnson says in the concluding words of his article, "we welcome all the modern devices that are proving their worth—art and story, song and jest; but if we have eyes to see, we may find art and story, song and jest in the language itself." And let us add that in proportion as we do so, the training we impart by teaching elementary Latin and Greek will be more valuable and the foundations we lay for subsequent work in the classical literatures more solid.

We have noted with interest the project of an annual state-wide Latin contest for the fourth-year pupils of

Catholic high schools in Michigan, sponsored by the Latin department of the University of Detroit. The declared purpose of the enterprise is to provide teachers in these schools with a new means of stimulating interest in the study of Latin. The three papers to be included in the contest will test the student's power of deriving English words from the Latin, his proficiency in Latin prose composition, and his ability in sight translation from Latin into English. The rules that will govern the contest and an outline of syntax and vocabulary, together with other helpful suggestions for preparing pupils to take part in the contest, have already been distributed. The undertaking seems to promise excellent results and we wish it every success and many imitators in other states.

On September 25 of this year another famous classical scholar passed away in the person of Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf. The (London) *Times*, under date of September 26, pays him this high tribute: "In the combination of erudition, productivity, and sheer genius he has left no one in the realm of classical studies who can be compared with him." Wilamowitz was the son-in-law of the great Mommsen and lived to the ripe age of eighty-two. Whilst he was not free from a certain brusqueness of manner, intolerance, and conceit, he was a tremendously popular and eloquent lecturer, with a magnificent voice and presence. Besides being a philologist of the very highest order, he possessed an extraordinary feeling for poetry and history. Despite his mistakes and faults, which were numerous, few scholars of any age have produced as many works of substantive worth as he in their own field of labor.

Sappho to Phaon

(Cfr. CLASSICAL BULLETIN, Vol. VII, p. 71)

O do not weep me, dearest, do not lay
The asphodel above my sombre grave;
But bring the pale narcissus and the bay,
And near me let the sleepy poppy wave.
Or root the iris with its rainbow hue
To prophesy me peace when grief is past,
Peace, when in days to dawn you come to me:—
I watched you sail and tried to go with you
And though I failed then, I shall win at last,
For love is never bound by any sea.

I loved you, Phaon, and I love you still
Although you answer me when it is late;
Love is no garment I may doff at will,
Love is no mask that I may change for hate.
I said I would not love you, but I lied,
Because I love you yet in spite of you,
And even to love for love alone is good;
These soft low songs that in my heart abide
I can not still, no matter what I do,
And if I might—I know I never would.

Weston, Mass.

GEORGE C. O'BRIEN, S. J.

Anything that tends to encourage and develop taste and skill in choice and connection [of words] tends to promote a not wholly useless art. For persons of more ordinary gifts it is not easy to find a more effective discipline ready to hand than the practice of translation.
—Heitland

The Anabasis—Thrilling and Inspiring

I confidently make the bold assertion that Xenophon's *Anabasis* is a thrilling as well as an inspiring narrative.

Contrary to the opinion of even so eminent a Greek scholar as Andrew Lang, I venture to assert that the average class of American boys will find *The Retreat of the Ten Thousand* excitingly interesting and deeply instructive. Once the class vividly visualizes the situation of the ridiculously small Greek army in the midst of an intensely hostile country—the country of the dreaded Great King of Persia—the interest never really flags. Thereafter the courage of the Greeks and their resourcefulness arouse wonder and admiration, while their unflinching fidelity to their gods and unwavering confidence in a divine providence is a constant inspiration to the much more favored Christian youth of today.

What if today ten thousand American young men, say, ex-soldiers of the world war, entered Turkey to depose the sultan and put in his place a rebel, and then, suddenly finding themselves abandoned by their Turkish allies, their weapons no whit better than those of the natives, fought their way to the coast, unassisted, through snows, over mountains, across unbridged rivers, subject to attacks of the natives day and night? Would not every move in their march be eagerly followed in the newspaper accounts? What splendid material for flaring headlines would not almost every page of Xenophon's account offer!

The dramatic and mysterious episode of Orontas will thrill any "movie fan." Orontas receives an important commission from Cyrus. Trusted implicitly by Cyrus, he sends a faithful servant to Darius. Cyrus, not Darius, receives the message. It is night. A few thousand Greek hoplites silently, in small groups, enter the Persian camp, and surround Cyrus's tent. Orontas is led in. A tense cross-examination follows. Characteristically Orontas says: "Even if I did pledge to be true to you now, you would not trust me again."—"And no one of the Greeks or Persians ever saw Orontas any more, either dead or alive, from that day forth." And the negatives are repeated and multiplied.

And again, what a tense moment it must have been when the Greeks saw Darius's army approaching! How they noticed, as they were straining their eyes forward, first, the dust, raised by the tramping of nine hundred thousand men, approaching far off in the distance, like a cloud; then here and there a flash of armor in the sun: then the high spear-points, the serried ranks, and finally even the color of the uniforms! Veterans of former campaigns noted the provinces from which the several divisions came. How vivid, too, the fatal battle scene!

Thrilling scenes abound during the *Katabasis*. Here is one that is tragic, ridiculous, and sublime in turn. The Greek generals are treacherously killed. Xenophon is addressing the dispirited soldiers, when someone suddenly sneezes. At the sound the entire army, eight thousand strong, with one impulse do homage to the god, and there and then, on Xenophon's suggestion, vow sacrifices to Zeus and the other gods—which a few months later they religiously fulfill.

Then there is Xenophon's masterful stroke of leader-

ship in quelling a riot. He had just resigned his generalship. The army, stung to fury by unjust treatment, breaks down the city gates to pillage and burn. Xenophon appears, is acclaimed, induces them to form in line, and in a few minutes calms them and shames them. "By the gods, let us not be madmen; let us not end shamefully as enemies of our fatherland, of our own friends and countrymen! May I be ten thousand fathoms underground, before I see you doing what you are about!"

Other thrilling scenes abound in each of the seven books. They are told simply, vividly. The cleverly executed crossing of the Centrites, the hazardous passage over the Carduchian mountains, the first sight of the sea—to them the longed-for glimpse of home—the unwelcome receptions they receive in various towns under the Spartan commanders, all are replete with exciting incidents.

There is not merely interest and inspiration in the *Anabasis*; there is also spiritual instruction. What impresses one more and more, as one reads and rereads the *Retreat of the Ten Thousand*, is the religiousness of the Greek soldiers. The frequent consulting of the gods through omens, the watchword at Cunaxa, "Zeus, the Saviour and Victory," the continual sacrifices and prayers, the unflinching fidelity to oaths and vows, bring home to the attentive reader the touch of other-worldliness in these sturdy fighters. Their dependence upon the will of the Supreme Being, who rules the destinies of men paternally and can be influenced by petitions and offerings, is an obvious fact to them. Mixed up with accidental errors, there is here much fundamental and universal truth. Even the high-school student easily sees the evident contrast between this humble submission to the gods and the utter spiritual emptiness of our modern world. We minimize a thousand times more than the Greeks exaggerate. It is only the deeply spiritual man who sees the finger of God as truly in the ordinary as in the extraordinary events of daily life.

With such abundance of interest and appeal, any wide-awake teacher can make the *Anabasis* live. He must get the class to read it entire, either in the original, or partly in the original and partly in translation. He must be enthusiastic himself. He must see the dominant importance of the *Anabasis* for subsequent world history, as, for example, Grote sees it in his "History of Greece." With Leo V. Jacks, in his sprightly and attractive "Xenophon, Soldier of Fortune," he must admire Xenophon. Without blinding himself to Xenophon's shortcomings, he must try to find in him those literary charms which some of the ancient critics have ascribed to him, as when Dionysius of Halicarnassus says in his "Letter to Pompeius": "It is not only for his subjects that Xenophon deserves commendation, but also for the arrangement of his material. Everywhere he begins and ends in the most fitting and appropriate way. His divisions are good, and so is his order and the variety of his writing. He displays piety, rectitude, resolution, geniality, in a word, all the virtues that adorn the character."

Milford, Ohio

ALPHONSE M. ZAMIARA, S. J.

Bridging Twenty Centuries

"Distance lends enchantment" and, more often, gives rise to unsympathetic ignorance. At a "movie" we witness a news reel in which a dapper young "Jap" jumps from a 1931 sport model coupe and rushes into an ultra-modern hotel lobby in Tokio. Or we pick up the latest National Geographic; there is a picture of a Chinese or Philippine maid walking down an avenue, her open parasol balanced on her shoulder; at first glance we mistake her for a Washington débutante. We are rather surprised. The distance between us and the other side of the earth has taken away much of the reality of that half of the planet. It is almost with reluctance that we are brought to admit that those people are, after all, very much like ourselves.

A great span of time has the same effect as have the thousands of miles around half the world. To be really interested, then, in the life and literature of ancient Rome, we must span the chasm of those long years with a feeling of kinship for the civilization of that time, which is, in truth, closely related to our own.

The more vividly we can show a Latin student that the people, the conditions, the thought, and even individual traits and customs of ancient Rome were very similar to those of our own modern era, the more interested will he become in that language. Calling to his attention little instances or habits very like to instances and habits of his own day, will add a personal touch to his interest in Latin. Most students care little about the sublimity of a language; nor do they feel, as a rule, any overwhelming sense of its beauty; but all of them will feel an interest never before experienced, if they are brought into immediate contact with incidents akin in almost every way to those that occur every day in their own lives.

The mention of a few of these points of contact between the ancient and the modern student may prove useful, though in teaching we need not confine ourselves to similarities; contrasts can create just as much interest. Any information we can give the students about the life and actions of the Romans will foster a better understanding of that race, and this will carry them far towards an appreciation of the ancients and their literature. A not altogether dissimilar case is that of a teacher who feels that he misunderstands the character of a certain pupil. Let him go to his home, note the environment in which he lives, learn something of the customs and habits of his family, and many misunderstood traits will clear up like the light of day—traits which would otherwise remain in the realm of the inexplicable.

Games are the life of a boy, and the boy of today thinks he has a monopoly on all that is best in the line of sport. But two thousand years ago the Roman boy got down on one knee to play a game of marbles much like that played today. A ball-game, called *pila trigonalis*—not, of course, so complicated and highly specialized as the great American sport, but nevertheless a ball-game—was played. Either a small ball, *pila*, or a larger one, *foliis*, was used. In this particular game only three

boys took part, with the ball thrown to one of them who struck it with his fist or arm. Anyone who has witnessed a St. Louis 'cork-ball' game will have a fair idea of this ancient sport. Other games of ball had many more participants and were more like our game of 'medicine' ball.

Expert chess players abounded, and their game, the *ludus latrunculorum*, was played according to the same underlying principles as our games of checkers and chess; for the art of the player consisted in taking his adversary's pieces by bringing them between two of his own—*medius gemino calculus hoste perit* (Martial, *ep.* 15), or in blocking all his adversary's moves. Another game, in which every modern boy has either increased or squandered his Sunday spending money, was played by Roman street urchins—'matching pennies,' known to them as *ludere par impar* (Hor. *Sat.* 2.3).

The "high-school" boy of Rome, attending the *ludus grammaticus*, had, as too many of our boys have, his pair of dice. The game called *alea* was played with one of two kinds of dice. The *tali* had four flat surfaces and two pairs were used in a game. The best throw, *Venus*, was had when different numbers came up on each of the dice:

Cum steterit nullus vultu tibi talus eodem
Munera me dices magna dedisse tibi. (Mart. *ep.* 14)

The worst throw, *canis*, was made when all the numbers turned up were aces; *unum enim significat canis* (Isidore, 18.16). The *tesserae* were in every way like our own dice, except that they did not 'match.' Their six sides were stamped with the numbers from one to six, with the two opposite sides always totalling seven. One pair was used in a game. Unlike the *tali*, which were used chiefly in the privacy of one's home, the *tesserae* were the dice of the gambling dens of Rome. The frequentation of these resorts was as expensive then as today, and as dangerous. They were continually under the police surveillance of the aediles:

Arcana modo raptus e popina
Aedilem rogat udus aleator. (Mart. *ep.* 5)

In addition to this, what chance had the gambler when 'loaded' dice, *nequiores tali* (Mart. *ep.* 4), were used! Juvenal tells us that the money realized by the gambling den owners was so great that a purse was all too small for carrying the money that had to be brought to the gaming table. A man brought his treasure chest along with him and might hand over the whole of it in the course of one evening; a single throw often brought him 100,000 sesterces closer to the poorhouse:

... neque enim loculis comitantibus itur
ad casum tabulae, posita sed luditur arca.
proelia quanta illie dispensatore videbis
armigero. Simplexne furor sestertia centum
perdere et horrenti tunicam non reddere servo? (*Sat.* 1.89)

Today all but the very rich feel the tyranny of the large trusts in the extravagant price of rent and food. From Juvenal, again, we learn that poverty stalked about at Rome, always standing in the way of positive merit; all commodities were sky-high in their price:

haud facile emergunt quorum virtutibus opstat
res angusta domi, sed Romae durior illis
conatus: magno hospitium miserabile, magno
servorum ventres, et frugi cenula magno. (Sat. 3.164)

Though a man had money, he was no better off then at Rome than he would be today, walking the streets at night in any of our large cities. Juvenal, again, in his third Satire, so pregnant with information about life at Rome, paints for us the Roman bully or 'gangster.' He steps out of the darkness of the night and cries, "Stick them up!" Nothing the pedestrian can do or say will prevent the bully from using his massive strength on his victim's helplessness:

stat contra starique jubet. Parere necesse est;
nam quid agas, cum te furiosus cogat et idem
fortior? "unde venis?" exclamat . . .
"nil mihi respondes? aut dic aut accipe calcem." . . .
dicere si temptes aliquid tacitusve recedas,
tantundem est: feriunt pariter . . . (Sat. 3.290-98)

If we do not hand over our lives to a ruffian on the streets at night, we do so to the thieves and burglars who visit us in our homes; so did the Romans. Lock and key were not protection enough against the intruder, who at the sleeper's first awakening sound, would thrust a dagger into his heart:

. . . Nam qui spoliare te
non derit clausis domibus, postquam omnis ubique
fixa catenatae siluit compago tabernae.
interdum et ferro subitus grassator agit rem. (Sat. 3.302)

Another store-house of interest are the ancient inscriptions and *graffiti*, scratchings and writings on walls. Boissier gives us their value: "We possess the streets and houses of Pompeii, but empty and mute; the *graffiti* seem to give us back the inhabitants. Pompeii comes to life again and is repopulated as we read them. We are no longer in the midst of ruins drawn with great difficulty from the ashes which had covered them during 18 centuries, but in a living town; and, as we pass through it, it teaches us much better than books, what was done, what was thought, and how life was passed in a country town in the first century of our era" (Boissier, *Rome and Pompeii*, 434). Small wonder that the *graffiti* prove interesting, and consoling too to the school-boy of today, when among them we find such as the following, written on a Pompeian wall by some Roman school-boy just finishing a distasteful class in Horace: *Q. Horatius Flaccus, magni di te perdant!*

The *graffiti* and inscriptions were in many ways for the Roman what the newspapers are for us today. There were then no "Classified Advertising" sections with their "Lost and Found" and their "Rooms for Rent" columns. The Romans just painted or scratched a notice on the walls of their homes. An interesting 'lost and found' *graffito* was unearthed in Pompeii:

URNA AENIA PEREIT. DE TABERNA
SEI QUIS. RETTULERIT DABUNTUR
HS LXV. SEI FUREM
DABIT. UND . . .

"A copper pot has been taken from this shop.
Whoever brings it back will receive 65 sesterces.
If anyone shall hand over the thief . . ."

Another inscription found at the same town could be put into one of our daily newspapers as its stands, with only a change of name:

TO RENT, from the 1st day of July,—
shops with floors over them; fine upper rooms;
and a house in the Arrius Pollio block,
owned by Cn. Alleius Nigidius Maius.
Prospective lessees may apply to Primus,
slave of Cn. Alleius Nigidius Maius.

Coins are another point of contact between the two ages. In our Latin authors we often meet with the citation of a price or of a certain amount of money. Without going into a detailed explanation of Roman numismatics, we could give the students some definite value for the different denominations of coins, so that, when they meet a reference to a Roman gentleman of so many sesterces, they would have some idea of the wealth of the man. We could refer to the *as* as the Roman penny, the *sestertius* as a nickel, the *denarius* as twenty cents, the *aureus* as a five-dollar gold piece. This was the actual worth, though not the purchasing power, of these coins in the time of Augustus. Ancient coins of the commoner sort can at present be bought at a rather cheap price. Were these passed round a class from hand to hand, without a doubt the year 1 A.D. would seem very much closer, and some boy might remark, "Just think, a Roman lad must have held this very coin in his hand."

Some may complain that the suggestions made in this paper regarding points of similarity between the two worlds are trivial. We admit it, and we have chosen such purposely. For it is not the deep reflections on life and the ultimate principles underlying it that will cause the youth of high-school age to acquire the interest needed to spur him on in his struggle through the next hundred lines of a text-book. The Latin classes of the college are the proper place for a detailed discussion of the more vital problems of life that confronted the Romans, as they confront us. Discussions on the philosophy of life prevalent in Rome and its striking similarity to our modern "free thought," comparison of religious beliefs, the influence of the ancient attitude towards marriage in bringing about the downfall of Rome—topics such as these are in place in dealing with maturer minds. The immature mind of the young pupil in the lower grades of the high school craves for something more congenial. It needs to be stimulated by interests more closely related to its own sphere, interests that may seem trivial to us, but are fascinating to the young. No classical teacher is fully prepared for his task without a thorough grounding in Greek and Roman private life.
St. Louis, Mo. HENRY W. LINN, S. J.

In order to judge poetry it is before all things necessary to enjoy it.—F. W. H. Myers

Of course, I am no enemy of translation. . . . But if one reads one's own translation too much, there is a danger which it fills one with horror to contemplate—the possibility of remembering one's own rendering and forgetting the original.—B. L. Gildersleeve

The Jesuits and Education

Many of our readers will be pleased to learn that the Rev. William J. McGucken, S. J., Regent of the School of Education of St. Louis University, is engaged in publishing an important work on Jesuit schools, entitled *The Jesuits and Education: An Investigation of Their Theory and Practice, Especially in American Secondary Education*.

The Introduction and Part I furnish the necessary historic background, requisite for a study of the educational activity of the Jesuits in the United States. The Introduction gives a brief account of the factors that brought about the acceptance of educational work by the Society of Jesus in the 16th century. Part I deals with the origins of the *Ratio Studiorum* together with an account of its outstanding characteristics as applied in 16th and 17th century Jesuit schools.

Part II deals with the history of Jesuit educational activity in America. The chronicle of the sporadic attempts of the English Jesuits ministering to the Catholics of Maryland to establish a school during colonial days, the founding of Georgetown by ex-Jesuits after the suppression of the Society, the growth and development of Jesuit schools along the Atlantic coast after the Restoration, are narrated here. Special sections are also given to the various national groups of Jesuits, and their establishment of schools—the Belgians in Missouri, the French in Kentucky and Louisiana, the Italians on the Pacific Coast and in Colorado, and the Germans in Buffalo.

Part III treats of the evolution of the modern American Jesuit high school. Difficulties were encountered by the various groups in attempting to apply Father Roothaan's revised *Ratio* in the American schools. The democratic spirit of the New World, its demand for practical subjects, perhaps the lack of cultural background and educational traditions in most of the pioneer communities where the American Jesuits located their schools, forbade the introduction of the 1832 *Ratio* in its entirety into any of the American Jesuit schools. Nevertheless the Jesuits of the various American provinces of the Society strove loyally to save the spirit of the *Ratio*, and attempted under great difficulties to preserve the classical tradition in their schools. But various factors were at work that necessitated a modification of the prescriptions of the *Ratio*. Educational currents outside the walls of the Jesuit college necessarily had effect within. The growth of the high-school movement in the United States, and the belief that its purpose was not primarily to prepare for college, brought about the disintegration of the Jesuit "college," hitherto a single entity, into two distinct institutions—college and high school. Standardizing agencies and practice in other institutions have caused a modification of the traditional Jesuit curriculum, and to a lesser extent, the Jesuit method of teaching.

Fr. McGucken's study shows that, despite these accidental changes, the American Jesuits have clung tenaciously to the primary purpose of Jesuit education, the formation of cultivated, loyal, Catholic citizens, obedient

to God and the Church, obedient to the laws of the State. These chapters of American Jesuit educational history, the heroic efforts of the Jesuits to keep up the efficiency of their schools in the face of tremendous difficulties, financial and otherwise, their unwillingness to sacrifice Jesuit educational ideals to passing whims and fancies—all this, we are sure, will make interesting reading, not only for the student of the history of Catholicism in the United States, but for anyone that is interested in seeing the Greek and Latin classics retain a firm hold on American secondary education.

Shelley as a Substitute for Horace

(Continued from p. 19)

pare, I say, these programs point by point, and this fact will stand out, that one is *the program of least resistance*, that one involves training while the other does not, that one is a culture, the other the negation of culture.

Quite enough has been said to establish the point that the poetic of Horace and that of Shelley are poles apart, and quite enough also to enable one to judge whether or not the modern doctrine represents a notable improvement over the old. Now one word by way of conclusion. That boys trained in our own schools should study the mature, genial, polished Horace as a mere exercise in Latin verse, and should adopt the work of this unbalanced and extravagant modern adolescent as their guide in poetic taste and theory may well be considered one of the major tragedies of our times. Yet it is the inevitable issue of the system which teaches one poetic theory in one department of the school and its opposite in another. For, one of these theories is the path of least resistance, which youth will inevitably take in preference to the hard narrow way, particularly when it is solemnly offered as an acceptable one.

The Christian humanism we have inherited from our predecessors in the Church, as embodied in the *trivium*, contained no such inconsistencies. Their presence in our modern system is the result of failure to realize that the basis of modern English literary theory is no longer classical. They will be eliminated only when it is clearly seen that the new theory is not only a distinctly inferior one, as far as artistic productivity is concerned, but is based upon a philosophy that is both anti-classical and anti-scholastic, and hence, is the poorest sort of preparation for the course in scholastic philosophy that finishes off the years of poetic and rhetoric in our schools.

St. Louis, Mo.

CALVERT ALEXANDER, S. J.

Xenophanes was one of the few to protest against the extravagant cult of athletics: of course, nobody heeded. Pretty obviously, we need him today; but he would still be preaching to deaf ears.—Edward Henry Blakeney

A good teacher is the best advertisement for his subject.

